

Gardena Valley Baptist Church

Issue 11

June 2, 2010

SPIRIT

GVBC MISSION STATEMENT

Helping people discover Jesus and become His fully devoted followers.

GVBC PURPOSE STATEMENT

At GVBC, we seek to glorify God by:
~reaching the world for Christ
~uniting as His family
~worshiping Him with our lives
~growing in Christ-like character
~and serving others in love.

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Dear Family,

The other day I was reminded of how blessed we are with our new facilities. When Jesus Contreras shared his baptism testimony, he said that he had been invited to play basketball in our recently built Community Hall and then was led to follow Christ by David Uratsu. Others have shared how a particular program we are now able to hold because of our facility brought them to our church. While facilities don't build relationships, they keep out the cold

and rain and are a valuable tool for fulfilling God's purpose; we have been blessed to have them.

Over the last 9.5 years we have also been blessed to have received over \$6.5 million in donations to help pay for these facilities. The total cost, including relocation expenses, architectural fees, interest on the construction loan, etc., was \$10.3 million. Our original real estate loan to finance the difference was \$3.9 million and over the last 18 months it has been paid down to \$3.8 million. But in six months we will be coming to the end of Nehemiah 3 so we have had to make some tough decisions on how to pay off the remainder of the loan.

Your Finance Committee, Board of Deacons and staff have been meeting for the past three months. We have been praying, interviewing different capital stewardship consulting firms, discussing our needs, determining the best timing and asking other churches about their experiences. As a result we have come to the following conclusions:

1. We will conduct our own in-house capital stewardship campaign without hiring a capital stewardship consultant.
2. We will postpone the start of our fourth campaign from October 2010 to January/February 2011.
3. We will ask all those who have been giving to Nehemiah 3 to continue giving for four additional months until we complete the new campaign.

As of right now, we are praying about campaign chairpersons and calendar, a theme and a support person. We are aware of the economic times we are in, yet we are also aware of the many opportunities. We also look forward to how much more we will be able to do once our loan is paid off.

So...pray. Through this whole process, we have seen God's hand at work. From the start of the vision to the design, the construction, the first gifts, and now the people whose lives have been changed. We are not alone – we chose to follow our God. We also pray that you will continue your Nehemiah 3 support until April 2011 at which time you will be challenged for a new commitment.

Praise God for His blessings!

His child,
Pastor Steve



Baptism Testimonies from Sunday, May 30

Hi I'm **Mark Ujimori** and I just want to share a little about how God led me to be baptized.

Baptism is something I have put off, at first because I was scared, then because I felt I was not living the life God wanted me to live. Now I feel God is leading me to be an example and a spiritual leader in my relationships; to be a good friend, son, brother and in the coming months, husband.

I can no longer put this off and feel now is the time to restore my relationship with God, to trust and have faith and to rid myself of doubt. I want to allow God to guide me and use me as His tool.

I choose to get baptized today to publicly proclaim my belief in the Lord Jesus Christ — that he died, was buried, and rose again to forgive me of my sins. Thank You.



Kristen Ueda's Testimony: I have been coming to GVBC for as long as I can remember. I remember playing in the Kindergarten classroom and moving up to the Elementary School program.

Judy Hiroshige used to lead worship before we split up into our classes and she would tell us, if we wanted to accept Jesus Christ in our hearts, we should repeat a prayer after her. So, I silently repeated the prayer, at least a couple of times, just to make sure it worked.

Since then, GVBC has been a large part of my life. I grew up going to Sunday school and Pioneer Club, then the Junior High group and then the Senior High group. I have made many friends here and I even met my fiancé [Mark Ujimori] through GVBC.

God has been very good to me. He has given me two loving parents, who have always been good examples of Christ, friends and family who truly care about me, and experiences which have helped me to grow.

A couple of weeks ago, when Rick Chuman spoke, I felt very convicted when he said, "Where we are now is our mission field." It doesn't have to be in another country; our mission field can be at work, with our friends, or even at home. God has placed us in our current situations to be a light to those immediately around us. I know I can be a better example of Christ at work, especially right now.

I know God has plans for my life and I look forward to what He has in store.



Charles Schneider:

Hi, my name is Charles Schneider. I am only thirteen years old, so my testimony will be pretty short.

I have only been in California for almost a year and a half. This is the first church I've been to and I've been going to the Junior High group for about a year.

I have accepted Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior. I know that getting baptized is a big step in Christ and I want to take it.



Jesus Contreras:

It was a desire in my heart that woke me up and I turned to see the Lord in a different way.

So, when I accepted Jesus in my heart as my Lord and Savior, I also asked Him to please accept me first and forgive me.

I was living my life without Him and I realized He always was there in my life. He filled me with a beautiful church. Patiently, He waited with open arms and I feel so thankful that I need to share it with world.



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

JULY 26-30, 2010

9:00AM - 12:15PM

PRESCHOOL TO ENTERING 5TH GRADE

REGISTER NOW THROUGH JULY 11TH

(310) 323-5683 WWW.GVBC.NET

Come join our Prayer Safari! This year's theme centers around the Lord's Prayer. Children will learn about the love of Christ.

Registration forms will be available on Sunday, June 6 in the Sunday school classes, on the pamphlet table in the Narthex or from the office.

Deadline to register and for supply donations is Sunday, July 11 or until maximum capacity has been reached.

We need your help! VBS is a wonderful opportunity to minister to the children in our neighborhood and church. Would you consider just one of the many ways you can help us bring Jesus to the lives of these young ones?

There are so many ways to be involved. We need help with:

- ✚ Donating supplies for crafts.
- ✚ Contributing snacks for the staff.
- ✚ Teaching or helping in the classroom.
- ✚ Being a mighty prayer warrior.

We also need donations for:

- ✚ **Craft supplies:** (place in collection box in Narthex). Empty white wipes boxes, jar lids with ribbing, toilet paper rolls, heavy cardboard, soap boxes, round ice cream cartons with lids, beads, markers, crayons, disposable canisters or cans with lids, old solid colored sheets, wooden horse, cardboard boxes, blue painter's tape.
- ✚ **Decorating supplies:** (items will be returned to you. Contact Jenny Kaya at jykaya@hotmail.com or the office.). Large safari stuffed animals, Khaki or tan colored tents, woven baskets, animal print sheets/blankets, Bongo drums, clay pots, safari hats, throw rugs, child's jeep (rideable), plants, African travel posters.
- ✚ **Refreshments for our VBS Staff:** (contact Jody Komae at Heart4kids@aol.com). We like to provide a break area for the staff where they can have a quick refreshment before going back to work with the children. Please provide any kind of finger food you think they might enjoy. To be dropped off daily in the church kitchen.
- ✚ **Your time:** If you have time to help prepare for or work at VBS, please let us know how you would like to help. We hope to have 175 kids on campus the week of VBS so it is very important we get our staff in place and organized to insure our ministry to the children will run as smoothly as possible. We need a form filled out by every volunteer even if you have already committed to help. Forms need to be on file by July 16.

For volunteer sign up or information contact:

Susan Wakuta, ext 689 or susan@gvbc.net.



Most Effective Witness

Profile of Rei Abe, Nichigo Secretary

By Kathy Aiso

“Witnessing to family is the hardest.”

—David Araya, GVBCer

Unknowingly, **Rei Abe’s** father met a challenge, which positively influenced Rei. As a middle-school student in Japan, Rei hung out with six female and male friends.

Misconceptions

One day, one of these friends confided, his father’s worldly behavior belied his saintly conduct at the Buddhist Temple. Appearing spiritual as temple master, this father would be out carousing during the week. This confidence brought up Rei’s father, a Christian pastor. This friend also categorized Rei’s father as having duo lifestyles. “My father is not like that,” Rei responded.

Living honorable lives

Although Rei never doubted her father had nothing but upstanding behavior, she began observing him closely at night. “Did he sneak out to have some fun, like her friend’s father?” she pondered. Within a short period, Rei concluded that both her dad and mom lived upright lives. A question then popped into her head, “My parents live right, but what if the religion is wrong?”

Comparing religious systems

God gave Rei an opportunity to compare Christianity to two major belief systems in Japan. The school’s field trip to a Buddhist temple, afforded Rei the opportunity to learn more about Buddhism. Rei learned, Buddhists believed by their good actions, they would enter heaven. In contrast, she knew Christianity taught one could only go to heaven by accepting Christ as Lord and Savior.

At school, Rei was exposed to the evolution theory. Through a video, Rei later learned about the amazing ability of the bat to flawlessly navigate through dark places without use of its eyes. “This couldn’t have happened by happenstance. God had to create the bat and the universe as well,” Rei concluded.

In thinking about her parents’ example, weighing Christianity against two major belief systems, as well as drawing the conclusion about God’s existence after the video, Rei came to realize Christianity was true. In her heart, Rei knew God was real and sent His Son to die for our sins. She accepted Christ as her Savior and was baptized at her church.

Choice between church and basketball

A native of Ibaraki Prefecture in Japan, Rei grew up with two older brothers, Kaoru and Makoto and a



younger brother, Satoshi. They attended Mitsukaido Shalom Church, where her father, Pastor Kyoshi Matsuyama was pastor.

In high school, Rei had to choose between church and basketball. As a serious basketball player at Mitsukaido High School, Rei played center. On Sunday mornings, the team held mandatory practice, which conflicted with church.

Rei couldn’t do both so she wisely chose church, even though, she really didn’t want to quit the team. In tears, she announced to her teammates and coach, “I can’t do this anymore.

God melted the hearts of her tough teammates and strict coach. The coach let Rei be the exception for not attending Sunday morning practice so she could attend church. She received overwhelming support in her choice from her teammates.

Rei meets her future husband

Following college, Rei worked as a kindergarten teacher, as well as a worker in an elderly home. Through a shared hobby, Rei later met her future husband, Aki Abe. They are the parents of three children, Samuel, Marie, and Sophie, ages 14, 11, and nine, respectively.

Loves riding her unicycle !!!

In the 1990s, the Abes moved to the U.S. so Aki could work here for an Internet related business. They attended a Taiwanese church in Lomita before coming to GVBC in 2002. After having their children attend VBS at GVBC, they felt led to join our church. Both Rei and Aki are actively involved in the Nichigo division. In January 2010, Rei started as the Nichigo secretary, a job which she enjoys. “The job and the pastoral staff whom I work with are so supportive and wonderful,” she beamed. Outside of work and church, Rei enjoys riding the unicycle. It’s a free-time pastime, which her husband and children enjoy doing too!

God’s self-sacrificing love for us

Rei’s favorite Bible verse, John 3:16 reminds her how self sacrificing, merciful, and unconditional God’s love is.

“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.”

Having three children, Rei can only imagine the anguish, heartbreak, and sacrifice God went through to allow His Son to die for us. His love inspires Rei to strive to be, like her parents, an effective witness for Him.

Family News

Memorial services announcements:

- ✚ The memorial service for Jo Ann Inafuku's husband, Nelson [passed away on May 18], will be held Friday, June 4 at 10:30 AM at GVBC. Pastor Steve Langley is officiating.
- ✚ The memorial service for Eglá Tingson's husband, Greg [passed away April 24 in the Philippines], is on Saturday, June 5 at 1:30 PM at GVBC. The Tingsons are missionaries supported by GVBC.

Congratulations to:

- ✚ Brian Lo who is graduating from Fuller Theological Seminary. His commencement ceremony is on Saturday June 12.
- ✚ The Right Hand of Fellowship was extended to our new members during Sunday, May 30 services. Welcome to Brandon Barba, Kate Bun, Kevin Eguchi, ZaVonía Fitts, Bethany Hadley, Denise Hadley, Kathleen Hadley, Randy Kusano, Jonathan Lucas, and Paul Matsushima.

Letters to our family

- ✉ Dear Friends: On behalf of the City of Gardena, we would like to extend our genuine thanks for your donation of \$500 [from our LOVE fund], \$100 gift card to K-Mart, 23 bags and 1 box of food for our emergency food pantry. You are to be commended for taking an active part in assisting the needy of the community. Your spirit of sharing allows us to continue our Emergency Assistance Program of bringing together local churches, businesses, and individuals in our community to assist those in need. May we continue in our quest to try to keep up with the ever-growing needs of struggling families and individuals in our community. Sincerely, Deryl Lloyd, Superintendent of Recreation/Human Services/Building Maintenance, by Lydia James, Community Services Counselor

In the news

- 📷 A picture of James & Yuri Ogawa was spotted in the Saturday, May 29, 2010 *Rafu Shimpo* on the front page in an article titled "Nisei Veterans of Foreign Wars 60th Reunion." James & Yuri attended the event along with 175 veterans and their wives and families which was held in Reno, Nevada.

Mission Field

Jim and Leta Van Meter

Jim used the analogy about how a plant will only thrive if placed in rich soil, which has been given a lot of care and attention. Further down the line, the soil may need to be tilled and additional organic material added to create an optimum growing environment. Spiritually, Jim acknowledged that five years ago, his soul felt tired and dry, which led him to take a sabbatical.

"I came to realize I had taken my walk with the Lord for granted," Jim wrote. Jim realized he had failed to nurture and care for his soul. Like the gardening illustration, Jim needed to be aware of the condition of the *soil of his soul* and nurture conditions for optimum growth in the *garden of his soul*.

"As I care for and till the soil of my soul, then I am able to hear and receive life-giving words of love and appreciation from the Lord (2 Corinthians 3:18) — words that transform lifeless, hard, cracked soil into rich, moist garden-producing soil," he affirmed.

Jim listed the following factors as necessary for care of his soul: regular times of solitude and silence to hear from the Lord and His Word, regular day-long retreats, and weekly Sabbaths for worship and rest. This included getting out in creation to meditate and marvel at God's handiwork in nature. Jim came to the conclusion, the best thing he can bring to the missions community is the tilled soil of his soul.

"The condition of my soul is everything!" Jim shared.

Realizing tending to one's soul is paramount to an effective ministry, Jim and Leta are spreading this message. From May 21 — June 1, the Van Meters are encouraging missionaries in Costa Rica to regularly *tend to the tilling the soil of their souls*. They request prayer that they be sensitive to the leading of the Lord, as they seek to create an environment for receiving the lavish love of God.





CONTACT: office (310) 323-5683.

EMAIL: gvbc@gvbc.net [put your event in the subject line]. You can also call or email the event leaders directly.

WEBSITE: www.gvbc.net.

♥ Children's Ministry

- ♦ KidZone (1st- 5th graders), Fridays, 7:00 - 8:30 PM, Community Hall. Wear comfortable clothes and gym shoes to all events.

June 4 — Baseball

June 11 — Foxtail Tag

June 18 — Water Bottle Boats

June 25 — Sockey/5th Grade Farewell

- ♦ Vacation Bible School Sunday, July 26 to Friday, July 30 [see article on page 7].

Contact: Susan Wakuta, ext. 689, susan@gvbc.net.

- ### ♥ The Cross Shop
- a new ministry started by CityLights, helps train those with no previous work experience, to learn woodwork. They are requesting new or used equipment. For more information and for a list of the equipment, please pick up a flyer on the Narthex counter. Contact via the church office.

♥ Discovering Jesus Bible Study

Wednesdays of June 16, June 23 & July 7, 6:00 — 8:00 PM, room 113. Helps those who want to meet Jesus for the first time. Taught by Cyril Nishimoto. Info at the Guest Center in the Courtyard or contact Cyril via the church office.

♥ Baby Dedication Sunday, June 13

♥ 180 High School Ministry

- ♦ Sunday, June 20 — Recognition of Graduates
- ♦ Friday, June 25 — Departing Seniors' Farewell Party
- ♦ Saturday, June 26 to Friday, July 2 — Short Term Mission Trip to Long Beach.
- ♦ Sunday, June 27 — Promotion Sunday

Contact Daniel Matsuda, ext. 681, daniel@gvbc.net.

♥ Women's Breakfast

Saturday, June 26, 8:30—11:30 AM, Community Hall. All women college age and up invited. Come enjoy a delicious breakfast and rekindle your Women's Retreat friendships. Also, we will have a crafts workshop. More info to follow.

♥ Independence Day office closed Monday, July 5

♥ Ohana Family Festival

Saturday, July 10, 10:30 AM — 1:30 PM, Mas Fukai Park. A Free time for family and children in our community. We will be handing our free school supplies, snacks to our community and they can participate in games, story time, music & dancing, crafts. Volunteers needed! To volunteer contact director Barbara Moncada or the church office.

♥ Hope for the Future "Fireproof" Movie Night

Thursday, July 22, 6:00 — 9:00 PM, Sanctuary. Contact Cindy Matsuda hopecindyatsuda@gmail.com.

♥ Mexico Outreach Missions (M.O.M.)

🌐 Friday, July 23 to Sunday, August 1, Summer Mission Trip from Oaxaca to Panama

🌐 Saturday, October 2, Tijuana

🌐 Friday, December 17 to Sunday, December 19, San

Telmo Christmas Mission Trip

[NOTE: a U.S. passport is required]. Spanish is helpful, but not required. Contact Teresa Matsushima via the church office.

♥ 301 Class

Sundays of August 1 and 8, 12:30 — 3:30 PM. Learn about your unique spiritual gifts, your S.H.A.P.E. (Spiritual gifts, Heart, Abilities, Personality, Experience) and take the next step in the ministry exploration process. Taught by Pastor Annette Kakimoto. Class begins with a FREE lunch. Register by checking off the appropriate box on the back of your Connection form or contact Jan Magnani at the church office (310) 323-5683, ext. 0 or email her at: jan@gvbc.net [Class number in the subject line].

♥ GVBC Seminarian Golf Tournament

Monday, August 16, Rio Hondo Golf Club, 10627 Old River School Rd, Downey. Applications available on our website. Contact church office.

♥ Youth Summer Camp

Sunday, August 8 to Friday, August 13, Alpine Conference Center, Blue Jay, finished 5th to finished 11th grades. Contact Daniel Matsuda, Youth Pastor, ext. 681, daniel@gvbc.net.

♥ Neighborhood Day of Prayer Outreach

Saturday, August 21, 7:00 AM to 7:00 PM. On Saturday, Aug 14 and Sunday, August 15 we will walk the neighborhood to get their prayer requests. Contact Bob Matsushima via the church office.

♥ Primetimers' 2010 Calendar of Activities

• Great Reno Balloon Race & Lake Tahoe, Thursday, September 9 — Sunday, September 12. Cost \$492 per person double occupancy, single occupancy add \$150 (includes gratuity to the bus driver). Payment due: August 2.

• Glory of Christmas at Crystal Cathedral, Sunday, Dec. 12. Cost: \$105 (based on 19-28 participants) includes the gratuity to the driver. Please note: price does not include dinner. Please eat your dinner prior to boarding the bus. We will leave GVBC at 6:00 PM and return at 10:30 PM. Payment due: October 24.

Make checks payable to Gardena Valley Baptist Church [your event title in subject line]. Contact: Keiko or Richard Imatomi via the church office.

♥ Keep Gardena Beautiful

Saturday, September 18. We'll be working in the wetland preserve near South Park on Vermont & Artesia Blvd. Contact the church office.

♥ Men's Retreat

Saturday, September 25 to Sunday, September 26 at Victory Ranch. Contact the church office.

♥ Cult & Occults Seminar

Sunday, September 26, 12:30 — 3:00 PM, room 113. Contact Marianne Matsuda

♥ Perspectives

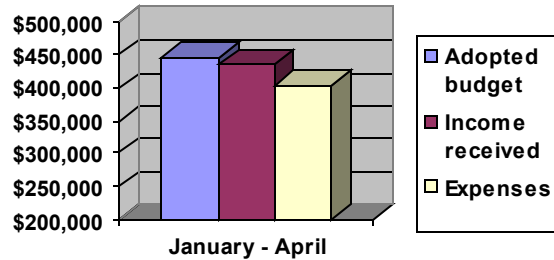
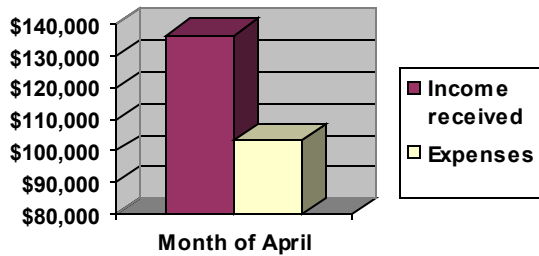
Mondays starting September 26 — January 10, 2011, 7:00 — 9:00 PM, Room 218/220. Contact Tom Park.

♥ Storytelling Class

Sunday, October 10, 12:30 — 3:00 PM, room 113. Contact Cyril Nishimoto.



Financial Report



Donations and Flowers given in honor or loving memory

FROM

Amy Kato
Martha Tanji
Kiku Florist

IN LOVING HONOR or MEMORY OF

Bob Kato
Jane Ueda
Weekly donation of flowers

Monetary donations given in memory of loved ones go into the College Scholarship Fund, unless specified.

Christmas Musical Orientation/Signup Meeting

Come to our orientation/signup meeting on:

Sunday, July 11
10:10 to 10:40 AM
room 218

Come learn about the musical's plot and signup to join our team. Also, you can pick up the script, CD of the songs, music sheets, and rehearsal schedule.



We will perform "A Prodigal Christmas" on:

Saturday, December 4
Two performances at 11:00 AM and 3:00 PM.

We need actors, singers, musicians, stage hands, and technical support. All are welcome to join our team.

Contact Susie Shelley, ext. 673, susie@gvbc.net or David Cheng at noelquest2007@yahoo.com [subject: Christmas Musical]

Scholarships

Available for GVBC undergraduate students:

Christian Service Scholarship

Several scholarships are given to encourage those who have used their time and talents in Christian service. For more information, please read the brochure attached to the application.

Scholarship application is available in the narthex, and are due on June 20th, including recommendations. For questions, please call Wendy in the church office, ext. #672.

**NewsLetter
DEADLINE**

Issue 12 will be uploaded to website on Wednesday, June 16. Hard copies available on Sunday, June 20 in the Narthex. All articles should be submitted by Sunday, June 13.

The **Spirit** is copyrighted © 2010 and a publication of Gardena Valley Baptist Church, 1630 W. 158th Street, Gardena, CA, 90247, (310)323-5683, FAX: (310)768-2783, Email: gvbc@gvbc.net, Website: www.gvbc.net, Senior Pastor: Steve Langley (310)323-5683, Editor: Susan J. Shelley, susie@gvbc.net. Office hours: 9:00am—5:00pm, Nichigo Website: www.gvbc.info. The **Spirit** is published twice a month to keep members and friends informed of programs of the church and to report news about GVBC and its people. Announcements, praise, prayer requests, and letters are welcomed. Articles are subject to editing and/or postponement.





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FATHERS DAY
 SUNDAY, JUNE 20



- ✚ Morning Worship @ 8:45 AM & 10:45 AM
- ✚ Nichigo Japanese-speaking Service @ 10:45 AM, Room 201

Sermon Series: *Metamorphosis*

Sunday, June 6/Communion

Pastor Steve Langley
 Colossians 3:1-11 ~ Hidden with Christ

Sunday, June 13/Baby Dedication

Pastor Steve Langley
 Colossians 3:12-14 ~ What to Put On

Sunday, June 20/Father's Day

Pastor James Chang
 Colossians 3:15-17 ~ The Peace/Word of Christ

Sunday, June 27

Pastor James Chang
 Colossians 3:18-4:1 ~ The Christian Home

English-speaking children's Sunday school runs concurrent with the Worship Services. Nichigo children's Sunday school 9:30am, Room 206.

- Steve Langley, Senior Pastor, ext. 0
- Bunso Otani, Nichigo Pastor, ext. 676
- Ron Matsuda, Associate Pastor — Teaching, ext. 679
- Annette Kakimoto, Assistant Pastor — Leadership Development, ext. 680
- James Chang — Assistant Pastor of Young Adults, ext. 682
- Chris Koga, Assistant Pastor—College, ext. 685 (pt)
- Daniel Matsuda, Assistant Pastor — Youth, ext. 681
- Layne Wakuta, Pastoral Intern — Junior High, ext 684 (pt)
- Susan Wakuta — Elementary Children's Director, ext. 689
- Linda Matsuda — Director Early Childhood, ext. 683 (pt)
- J.J. Frey, Worship Coordinator (pt)
- Wendy Nakano, Office Manager, ext. 672
- Rei Abe, Nichigo Secretary, ext. 677 (pt)
- Peggy Kushigemachi, Financial Assistant, ext. 675
- Jan Magnani, Secretary, ext. 671
- Dawn Robinson, Christian Educ. Secretary, ext. 678 (pt)
- Susie Shelley, Newsletter Editor ext. 673 (pt)
- Kevin Hatashita, Maintenance Asst. (pt)
- Socorro Kagawa, Maintenance Asst. (pt)
- Kevin Maeda, Maintenance Asst. (pt)
- Kyle York, Maintenance Asst. (pt)